IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

generating, ~~on~~ by a first computer, a first license for software installed on the first computer, ~~the first license valid for a first predetermined period of time stored on the first computer~~;

~~generating, on a second computer, a second license for the installed software, the second license valid for a second predetermined period of time stored on the second computer;~~

obtaining, by the first computer, from ~~the~~ a second computer ~~the~~ a second license for the installed software, wherein the second license is generated by the second computer;

determining, by the first computer, whether the second license is authentic; and

replacing, if the second license is authentic, the first license with the second license.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein ~~the first and second licenses each share~~ replacing, if the second license is authentic, the first license with the second license comprises:

setting, by the first computer, a ~~unique~~ first identifier to associate the first ~~and second licenses~~ license with the first computer~~,~~;

determining whether the first identifier matches a second identifier of the second license;

validating a digital signature of the second license;

determining, if the first identifier matches the second identifier and the digital

signature is valid, that the second license is authentic; and

replacing, as a result of determining that the second license is authentic, the first

license with the second license.

3.   (Cancelled)

4.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein obtaining from the

second computer the second license further comprises:

connecting to the second computer,

providing the second computer with at least a portion of the first license; and

exchanging the first license for the second license.

5.   (Previously Amended) The method of Claim 4, wherein connecting to the

second computer comprises connecting to the second computer via a communications

network.

6.   (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein the communications network

is the internet.

7.   (Previously Amended) The method of Claim 5, wherein exchanging the

first license for the second license includes formatting data from the first license

according to a set of text processing rules and transmitting the formatted data using a text transfer protocol.

8.   (Cancelled)

9.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising verifying whether the replaced license is valid, including determining whether the replaced license has expired.

10.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim ~~3, wherein~~ 2, further comprising digitally signing the first and second licenses, wherein digitally signing the first and second licenses includes applying a message digest algorithm to a portion of the license not including a length of the license or the digital signature, resulting in a message digest, the message digest being further encrypted with a binary key extracted from the unique identifier.

13.   (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture comprising:

a machine-accessible medium including thereon sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause an electronic system to:

generate, ~~on~~ by a first computer, a first license for software installed on the first computer, ~~the first license valid for a first predetermined period of time stored on the first computer;~~

~~generate, on a second computer, a second license for the installed software, the second license valid for a second predetermined period of time stored on the second computer;~~

obtain, by the first computer, from ~~the~~ a second computer ~~the~~ a second license for the installed software, wherein the second license is generated by the second computer;

determine, by the first computer, whether the second license is authentic; and

replace, if the second license is authentic, the first license with the second license.

25.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein the ~~first and second licenses each share~~ sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to replace, if the second license is authentic, the second license with the first license comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to:

set, by the first computer, a ~~unique~~ first identifier to associate the first ~~and second~~ ~~licenses~~ license with the first computer-;
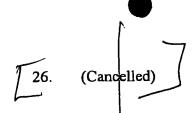
determine whether the first identifier matches a second identifier of the second license;

validate a digital signature of the second license;

determine, if the first identifier matches the second identifier and the digital signature is valid, that the second license is authentic; and

replace, as a result of determining that the second license is authentic, the first license with the second license.

26.   (Cancelled)

27.   (Currently Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 13, wherein the sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to obtain, by the first computer, from the second computer the second license further ~~comprises~~ comprise sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to:

connect to the second computer;

provide the second computer with at least a portion of the first license; and

exchange the first license for the second license.

28.   (Previously Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 27, wherein the sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to connect to the second computer comprise sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to connect to the second computer via a communications network.

29.   (Previously Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 28, wherein the sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to connect to the second computer via the communications network comprise sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to connect to the second computer via the internet.

30.   (Cancelled)

31.   (Previously Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 13, wherein the machine-accessible medium further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to verify whether the replaced license is valid, including determining whether the replaced license has expired.

32.   (Currently Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 26 ~~wherein the~~ further comprising sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to digitally sign the first and second licenses, wherein the sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to digitally sign the first and second licenses ~~includes~~ include sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to apply a message digest algorithm to a portion of the license not including a length of the license or the digital signature, resulting in a message digest, the message digest being further encrypted with a binary key extracted from the unique identifier.

33.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

selectively refreshing the second license prior to expiration of ~~the second~~ a predetermined period of time.

34.   (Currently Amended) The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the machine-accessible medium further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to~~:~~ selectively refresh the second license prior to expiration of ~~the second~~ a predetermined period of time.